

March 5, 2003

Akin Advocates Small Business Health Proposal During Key Capitol Hill  
Hearing

WASHINGTON, D.C.- At today's Small Business Committee hearing, U.S. Rep. Todd Akin made a strong case for a proposal that would help provide affordable health care to America's 25 million small business owners and their employees.

"Allowing small firms to pool their resources in order to provide their employees with quality, cost-effective health coverage is sound policy and simple common sense," Akin said regarding the Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2003 (H.R. 660). Association Health Plans would allow small employers to secure more affordable health insurance through their national membership organizations, such as the National Federation of Independent Business or the National Restaurant Association.

Akin, a leading member of the Small Business Committee and Chairman of the Small Business Subcommittee on Workforce, Empowerment and Government Programs is an original cosponsor of H.R. 660.

"In my own state of Missouri, almost 50 percent of those employed in the workforce are employed by small businesses," said the Congressman. "Many have felt the affects of the rising cost of health care. H.R. 660 levels the playing field and allows small businesses and the self-insured access to the same health insurance opportunities currently enjoyed by large corporations and labor unions.

"In a nation as prosperous and innovative as our own, there are surely effective, market-based solutions to the health insurance problem. That nearly 40 million of our fellow citizens lack medical coverage is unacceptable. That association health plans would help provide many of them with quality, affordable care is indisputable. Small business employees would benefit significantly from this important, creative and free market-oriented initiative.

"If Congress is truly dedicated to addressing the issue of the uninsured, we will pass this important legislation in the 108th Congress."